
THE MYSTERIOUS LETTER

sickening feeling stole over me and almost overpowered me. But I have been so long without my dinner. I think that is probably the cause."

"Then, come, Arthur, you shall not wait another minute," remarked Muriel.

Arthur stepped hastily to the fireplace, tore the mysterious letter and threw it into the flames. Some of the fragments, however, fell to the tiled floor in front of the grate. He did not notice them. He was too excited. Just then his thoughts were with the writer of the letter. Muriel, however, saw the few white scraps lying around and decided that she would gather them at the first opportune moment.

Arthur sat at table that evening, but he ate very little. For the last four years the management of the extensive lumber business had fallen to his lot, and it was only natural to expect that there were many worries in connection with it for a young man of twenty-eight. After dinner he lit a cigar. He tried to smile, but it was a strange smile, such as Muriel had never seen before. She did not like her brother's actions at all.

"I am going out for a while this evening," he said to her. "I have some little business matters to attend to. Now be a good girl and do not worry about me."

"How can I help it, Arthur? You know